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Charles J. Kersten





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COMMUNIST AGGRESSION

COMMUNIST TAKEOVER AND OCCUPATION

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## CONTENTS

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Pt.

1. Communist takeover and occupation of Latvia.
2. Communist takeover and occupation of Albania.
3. Communist takeover and occupation of Poland.
4. Appendix to Committee report on communist takeover and occupation of Poland.
5. Treatment of Jews under communism.
6. Communist takeover and occupation of Estonia.
7. Communist takeover and occupation of Ukraine.
8. Communist takeover and occupation of Armenia.
9. Communist takeover and occupation of Georgia.
10. Communist takeover and occupation of Bulgaria.
11. Communist takeover and occupation of Byelorussia.
12. Communist takeover and occupation of Hungary.
13. Communist takeover and occupation of Lithuania.
14. Communist takeover and occupation of Czechoslovakia.
15. Communist takeover and occupation of Rumania.
16. Summary report of Select Committee on Communist Aggression.





# COMMUNIST TAKEOVER AND OCCUPATION OF POLAND

*U.S. Congress, House, Select Committee on Communism*  
SPECIAL REPORT NO. 1

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON COMMUNIST AGGRESSION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-THIRD CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

UNDER AUTHORITY OF

H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438



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Charles J. Kersten

April 1, 1955

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE COMMUNIST  
AGGRESSION AND THE FORCED INCORPORATION OF THE  
BALTIC STATES INTO THE U. S. S. R:

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# CONTENTS

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	Page
Introduction.....	v
Historical background.....	1
Polish-Bolshevik War.....	2
Poland in 1918-39: a country of progress.....	3
Polish-Soviet relations, 1921-39.....	7
The first Communist elections in Poland.....	9
Soviet deportation of Poles: 1939-41.....	10
Polish contribution to the allied victory in World War II.....	12
Polish-Soviet relations: July 30, 1941-April 25, 1943.....	14
The origin and character of the Communist regime in Poland.....	16
Liquidation of the underground.....	20
The Warsaw uprising (August 1-October 2, 1944).....	21
The trial of the 16 Polish underground leaders in Moscow, June 1945.....	23
Situation in Poland after the Yalta Agreement.....	25
The referendum of June 1946 and the general elections of January 1947.....	27
Communist liquidation of Democratic forces after 1947.....	28
General elections of 1952.....	29
Life in present day Poland.....	30
Conclusions.....	32
Bibliography.....	36



## INTRODUCTION

The committee wishes to express its appreciation for assistance in the preparation of this report to Georgetown University, its faculty, and to the group of experts from various parts of the United States who cooperated with the university. The record of hearings of the committee together with individual sworn depositions from eye-witnesses, documents, exhibits, and other authoritative evidence formed the basis for this report.

The purpose of this report is to telescope the essentials of the history of Poland and its people, including the period of Communist takeover and occupation of that nation. It is hoped that this report will help the American people to understand better the nations and people enslaved by communism and thereby to more fully appreciate the true nature, tactics, and final objectives of the criminal conspiracy of world communism.

NOTE: IMPORTANT.—Reference is made here to an appendix to this report which is published separately and entitled "Polish Documents Report."



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# Union Calendar No. 929

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83D CONGRESS <i>2d Session</i>	}	HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	{	REPT. 2684 Part 3
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## COMMUNIST TAKEOVER AND OCCUPATION OF POLAND

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DECEMBER 31, 1954.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the  
State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. KERSTEN of Wisconsin, from the Select Committee on Communist  
Aggression, submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[Pursuant to H. Res. 346 and H. Res. 438]





# COMMUNIST TAKEOVER AND OCCUPATION OF POLAND

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## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Poland is a country whose history is deeply rooted in the Middle Ages and whose people, since the 10th century, have centered their lives around Christianity and the western cultural tradition.

The geographic position of Poland has been a major factor in the nation's turbulent history of war, invasion, and partition. The undulating plain which comprises most of the country has no natural boundaries on either the east or the west. It connects the German lowlands with the great plain of Russia. Consequently, throughout Poland's history her frontiers have been exposed to attack—in the West, from the Germans; in the East, from Mongols, Turks and later, Russians.

In 1386 Poland united with her northeastern neighbor, Lithuania. This bond was strengthened by the act of Horodlo in 1413, and the union was made complete in 1596 with the establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The union marked the golden age in Poland's history. In the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries she was one of the dominant economic and military powers of Europe, acting as an effective barrier to the invasions from the East and South.

The 18th century brought onto the European scene two strong militaristic and autocratic powers—Prussia and Russia.

Poland was not only in the path of Prussia's "Drang Nach Osten" but also in the path of Russian expansion toward the West.

The very nature of Poland's Government led to its own decline. The monarchy was elective, the executive was weak and subject to an excessively strong legislature. And when education declined, the nation's framework, which depended upon the patriotism and intelligence of the individual, was weakened. Poland had no administrative machine nor standing army for defense against strong and dynamic neighbors.

In 1762 Prussia and Russia reached an agreement which resulted in three partitions of Poland: in 1772, in 1793, and in 1795. Austria took part in the first and the third partition.

Between Prussia and Russia, especially, the partitions created a powerful vested interest against any revolt aimed at the restoration of a free Poland. This fact profoundly influenced the diplomacy of the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and was revived at Rapallo in 1922 and again in the infamous Nazi-Soviet pact of non-aggression in 1939. Prussian and Russian vested interest in the destruction of Poland was usually accompanied by a worldwide anti-Polish propaganda campaign which influenced European public opinion most strongly.

After the first partition a revival of civic virtues and political consciousness took place in Poland. On May 3, 1791, the Parliament

passed a constitution inspired by the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man.

The foreign rulers of Poland regarded the constitution of 1791 as a threat to their interests; and because they realized that it meant a revival of Polish national spirit, they hastened to stifle the new form of democracy. After a revolt led by Thaddeus Kosciuszko, a hero of the American War of Independence, the second and then the third partition followed.

At the time of the third partition Poland had 12 million inhabitants. The country was devastated and the people terrorized by armies of occupation representing three empires with a total population of 85 million. Despite such opposition the Poles rose in arms time and again against their oppressors in 1794, 1831, 1848, 1863, and again in 1905.

Poland has produced many great men who have contributed much to world culture and civilization. Some of the most outstanding include: Mikolaj Kopernik (Copernicus), (1473-1543), who formulated the modern conception of the solar system and is called the father of modern astronomy; Marja Skłodowska-Curie (1867-1934), a Nobel Prize winner who discovered radium and polonium; R. Weigel, who discovered the antityphoid serum; L. Zamenhof (1839-1917), who created Esperanto; Fryderyk Chopin (1810-49), who was one of the world's great composers; Adam Michiewicz, Juliusz Slowacki, and Zygmunt Krasinski, poets of the Romanticist period; Ignacy Paderewski (1860-1941), internationally known pianist, composer, and statesman; Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916), a Nobel Prize winner, author of *Quo Vadis*; and Wladyslaw Reymont, another Nobel Prize winner, who wrote the great rural epic *The Peasants*.

These are but a few of the many Poles who have distinguished themselves in the fields of science, philosophy, and the arts.

The fact that Poland was divided and occupied by foreign powers for 123 years affected every phase of her national life. The new Polish State, established in 1918, had before it an immense task: to remedy the disastrous effects of a long period of oppression and neglect and to rebuild what had been destroyed during World War I.

The American people took a friendly interest in Poland's future and showed a great sympathy with the Polish cause. Point 13 of President Wilson's 14 points, announced in January 1917, called for a free and independent Poland as one of the basic aims of the Allies.

#### POLISH-BOLSHEVIK WAR, 1919-20

Just as she did 150 years earlier, Poland in 1919 blocked Russian imperialism. This time the traditional Russian drive to enslave Baltic peoples, Poles, Ukrainians, and White Russians, had a new but powerful weapon: Communism. Lenin was in power in Moscow and the policy of the newly created Comintern was an immediate world revolution. The Bolsheviks had strongholds in Germany, Rumania, Hungary, and Italy. Had Poland been conquered the road would have been open for the conquest of tired, devastated Europe.

The Bolshevik plans failed, however. Polish armies, supported by the entire nation, repulsed the Red onslaught. Lord D'Abernon called the Battle of Warsaw of August 1920, "The 18th decisive battle of the world."

The Polish-Bolshevik War was ended by the Treaty of Riga, signed on March 18, 1921. Lenin called it "a voluntary and just agreement to stand for all time."

The treaty was the result of a compromise: Poland abandoned her claim to some 120,000 square miles of territory which before the partitions was her possession; about 1,500,000 Poles were left in Russia, and no more than 130,000 Russians were left in Poland. The Treaty of Riga was recognized by the conference of Ambassadors in Paris on March 15, 1923, and by the United States on April 5, 1923.

#### POLAND IN 1918-39: A COUNTRY OF PROGRESS

With the establishment of her eastern frontiers a great work awaited the Poles. They had to undo 123 years of division and foreign domination; the country was in ruin; every walk of independent life had to be started anew—from the unification of the laws to the building of elementary schools for thousands of illiterate peasants.

##### (a) *General information*

In 1939 Poland ranked sixth among the European countries in both area and population; 35,500,000 inhabitants lived in an area that covered 150,470 square miles. Though frontiers stretched for 2,250 miles, only 45 miles were along the coast of the Baltic Sea. The state was only about one-third the size of 15th century Poland which covered an area of 430,502 square miles.

Like many of the Central Eastern European countries, Poland had relatively large minority groups. In 1939 the division of the population by national groups was as follows:

Poles.....	24, 500, 000	Russians.....	130, 000
White Ruthenians.....	1, 350, 000	Jews.....	3, 500, 000
Ukrainians.....	4, 500, 000	Germans.....	900, 000

According to religion:

	Percent		Percent
Roman Catholic.....	64. 9	Hebrew.....	9. 5
Greek Orthodox.....	12. 0	Protestant.....	0. 7
Greek Catholic.....	10. 3	Others.....	0. 6

The first Polish Constitution of 1921 guaranteed the same political and civil rights to national minorities as the Poles themselves had. Enjoying full freedom to develop culturally and religiously, these groups had their own educational systems and representatives in Parliament and local governments. During 1939, for example, the Polish Government maintained around 3,000 Ukrainian schools.

Poland's foreign policy was based on an alliance concluded in 1921 with France and Rumania, the nonaggression pact of 1932 with the U. S. S. R., and the nonaggression pact concluded with Germany in 1934.

##### (b) *Natural resources*

With an estimated coal reserve of 161 billion tons in 1939 Poland had the third highest stock in Europe. Only Germany and Great Britain had higher amounts. The country's hydraulic power potential of 3.7 million horsepower was more than that of either Switzerland or Yugoslavia. Potassium, salts, rock salt, zinc, lead, iron ore, and oil were among the nation's other mineral assets.



Two-thirds of Poland was arable land. Of the country's area forests made up 22 percent—a percentage well over the average among European countries.

The country had a plentiful supply of skilled labor and a high birth rate which insured that this supply would be continuous. In the period of 1934 to 1939, the net annual increase in population amounted to 11.6 per thousand. From 1920 to 1937 the average increase of Poland's population was 14.9 per thousand people. In this period Poland's population increased by 26.9 percent, a higher rate than any other European country with the exception of Holland and probably of Russia. But for World War II, the population of Poland would have exceeded that of France before 1950 and equalled that of Germany by 1975.

### *(c) Agriculture*

Poland was a predominately agricultural country. In 1919, 72 percent of the population made their living from agriculture. By 1939 the figure dropped to 61 percent while 20 percent were gainfully employed in commerce and industry. But even in 1939 the percentage of Poland's population engaged in farming was high as compared with other European countries: France had 34 percent of its population engaged in agriculture, Czechoslovakia 34.5 percent and Germany only 21 percent.

Seventy-three percent of Poland's population lived in rural areas, making the country one of the most overpopulated areas in Europe. The great number of people trying to make a living at farming, coupled with an overall scarcity of capital, resulted in a relatively low average output in agricultural products. This in spite of the fact that between the years 1919–38, nearly 1,400,000 acres of fallow land were brought under cultivation.

Poland was a typical country of small landholders. The picture of prewar Poland drawn by Communist propagandists who try to depict it as a country of large landed estates—a 20th century feudalism—is false.

The arable area amounted to 61,400,000 acres. In 1920 holdings of more than 120 acres, that is, medium and large estates, accounted for 16,500,000 acres. In other words the larger landowners controlled around 28 percent of the arable land.

By 1939, because of a land reform carried on gradually but steadily, no more than 8,500,000 acres remained in the hands of the large and medium landowners. During the 19-year period 8 million acres had been divided among the peasants in the form of small farms. By 1939, then, less than 15 percent of the country's arable land belonged to owners of more than 120 acres, while 81.5 percent belonged to about 4 million small, independent farmers.

Concurrent with land reform the Government introduced many measures designed to increase the farmer's income and the volume of his production. The result was a notable increase in agricultural output despite the economic crisis of the early thirties. The most important of Poland's crops, rye, wheat, and potatoes, showed the following increase in the period 1913–38: Rye from 5,711,000 tons to 7,353,000 tons; wheat from 1,600,000 tons to 2,100,000 tons; potatoes from 24,789,000 tons to 34,558,000 tons.

From 1930 to 1938 Poland's inventory of livestock, including cattle, pigs, sheep, and poultry increased between 15 and 30 percent. The

country had a greater number of horses per unit of farm land than did any European country except Denmark.

Despite the progress made, the volume production and the income of Polish farmers was much lower than that of farmers in most other European countries and did not begin to approximate the average yearly income of the United States farmer in 1939 which was about \$258. The Polish farmer made no more than \$50.

#### *(d) Industry*

Until the middle of the 19th century Poland was almost exclusively an agricultural country. The partitioning powers, fearing that the nation might develop into a dangerous competitor to their own markets, looked with disfavor on any attempts to develop industry.

When the Poles gained their independence after World War I, they faced tremendous obstacles in their efforts to develop industries. There was lack of home capital, inadequate foreign credit, and an insufficient number of technicians to run the factories. Despite the obstacles, Poland made astounding progress in industry in the 21-year period of her independence.

In 1919 only 10.3 percent of Poland's gainfully employed were engaged in mining and industry while 72 percent were engaged in farming. Twelve years later, in 1931, while there were still 64.9 percent of the people on the nation's farms, 16.6 percent were engaged in mining and industry. By 1939 this figure had jumped to 20 percent.

The value of Poland's agricultural and industrial production in 1921 totaled 19 billion zlotys, of which 13 billion or 68 percent was from agriculture. By 1938 the value of the nation's industrial production was approximately equal to the value of the agricultural production.

Approximately 30,000 Polish industrial plants produced nearly all the consumer goods needed. The country also produced most of the food needed by its population.

Coal mining, Poland's most important work, and the one that served as the basis of all other industries, occupied almost 100,000 persons; the textile industry employed 157,000; 156,000 were employed in metallurgical and metal manufacturing work.

A well-developed lumber industry employing 68,000 workers did a large export business. The food-processing industry with 87,000 workers steadily developed its sales in both domestic and foreign markets. The chemical industry did an outstanding job in the production of artificial fertilizer and textiles.

Poland's industrial force numbered in 1939, 900,000 workers. Her progress in the previous 21 years was greater than in many highly industrialized western countries. If the industrial production of the year 1928—the peak year of prosperity—is represented by 100, the index in the spring of 1939, around 10 years later, amounted to 127.6 percent in Poland, 124.2 percent in Great Britain, 92.7 percent in the United States, and 91.9 percent in France.

In 1918 Poland had 1,750 locomotives, 3,043 passenger cars and 30,000 freight cars; in 1939 she had more than 5,500 locomotives, 11,350 passenger cars, and 164,000 freight cars. During the same period 1,250 miles of new railroad track were put down, and highways increased by 30 percent. Poland owned not a single ship in 1918 but by 1939 she had more than 500 merchant and passenger ships sailing the world's waterways.

Gdynia, which in 1919 was a tiny fishing village, had become by 1939 a city of more than 120,000 inhabitants and the largest port on the Baltic Sea. In 1924 this port had only 58 incoming and outgoing vessels with a total tonnage of 10,167. In 1938, when the port had become fifth largest port in Europe, it had 12,990 ships with a total tonnage of 9,174,000.

(e) *Finances*

Nearly all Poland's working capital and most of her fixed capital were lost during World War I. The only way for Poland to reestablish or to increase her capital was through the savings of her people, through the sale of goods and services abroad, through loans from other nations, and through the investment of foreign capital.

The Polish Government worked toward the establishment of a balanced budget and accomplished this as soon as the frontiers were finally fixed. American capital was of considerable help. In 1927 American banks accorded to Poland \$72 million as a so-called stabilization loan.

Poland's yearly governmental expenditures, which in the 1930's amounted to about \$500 million, seem modest in comparison with the current monthly expenses of the United States, or even with the pre-war Federal budget. However, this expenditure of about \$15 per capita was a heavy burden on the Polish citizen whose average annual income was nearly \$97 as compared with the average prewar income in the United States of about \$500 per capita.

A quarter of the annual expenditure went for national defense which was a large proportion, but later proved insufficient for adequate defense of a country whose frontiers offered no barriers to invading armies. Almost \$100 million was spent on education and social welfare. The third highest portion, \$40 million, went for paying interest and amortization of the national debt.

Poland pursued the same moderate policy with regard to the national debt as she did with the annual budget. Her \$900 million national debt at the end of 1938 was the smallest per capita of any European nation. The debt was divided equally between domestic and foreign investments.

(f) *Social and labor legislation*

By the time World War II broke out, Poland's social legislation had advanced far—a fact which again contradicts postwar Polish Communist propaganda.

In 1919 a law was passed introducing the 8-hour working day and the 46-hour week (modified in 1933 to a 48-hour week). The same law prohibited overtime work at night or on Sundays and holidays. Any employer desiring to continue work at such times was required to apply for a special license from a labor inspector.

In the coal-mining industry the working day for men engaged in work underground was limited by a law passed in 1937 to 7 hours a day which included the time required in going and coming from the pit. For particularly strenuous or dangerous mining the time was restricted to 6 hours a day.

A law in 1924 regulating working conditions of adolescents and women prohibited, in accordance with the Constitution, the employment of children under 15. The employment of adolescents was subjected to numerous physical and moral conditions. Every



adolescent was obliged to attend compulsory classes for which the employer was required to allow 1 full day a week with pay.

Women could not be employed under the surface in mines nor do any work that might prove dangerous to life, health, or morals. Night work was permitted to them only in very exceptional circumstances. The law prescribed that a woman could discontinue work 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after her confinement, and could not be discharged during that period because of her pregnancy. Special time assigned for feeding her baby was to be paid as ordinary working time. Firms employing over 100 women were compelled to establish and maintain nurseries.

Polish labor was organized in 298 trade unions, which in 1937 contracted 727 collective agreements with employers. The social-security system was based upon compulsory insurance of all working people. Health insurance covered 2,171,000 persons; accident insurance, 2,183,000; disability and old-age pensions, 2,523,000; and unemployment insurance, 1,690,000.

#### *(g) Education*

Historically, Poland had a great tradition in education. However, the 19th century enslavement by foreign powers resulted in a sharp decline. Then Polish schools were allowed only under Austrian rule. In the zones dominated by Russia and Germany only the language of the occupying power could be used. Secret Polish education was severely suppressed. Not until 1905 did the Russian Government allow Polish schools. By 1918, 70 percent of the peasants under Russian domination were still illiterate.

Progress in the educational field in the years 1919-39 was great. By 1938 there were 28,722 elementary schools attended by 4,851,000 children. During the same year, the country's 722 secondary schools had a total enrollment of 221,200. In addition to numerous nurseries, there were 1,651 kindergartens. An Institute of Mental Hygiene was created to care for mentally handicapped children. The teachers, who were organized into 3 unions, were served by 74 teachers' colleges and 34 teachers' libraries.

By 1939 there were 6 universities, 21 colleges, including 2 colleges of engineering, 314 learned societies, 141 museums, and 10,146 amateur theatrical companies.

#### POLISH-SOVIET RELATIONS, 1921-39

Polish-Soviet relations between the two world wars were carefully studied by this committee. Extensive literature consisting of official documents, minutes of diplomatic negotiations, and texts of treaties, declarations, and agreements were analyzed. In addition, oral and written testimonies were taken from leading Polish diplomats. Jozef Lipski, Ambassador to Germany in 1933-39 and presently an unofficial representative of the Polish Government-in-Exile in the United States, testified in Chicago, Ill. Wacław Grzybowski, Ambassador to the U. S. S. R. in the years 1936-39, and Count Edward Raczyński, Ambassador to Great Britain in 1934-45, testified in London. Several other diplomats, both in Europe and the United States, gave testimony on the subject.

After hearing the testimonies, and studying pertinent documentation, the committee concluded that Poland had made every effort to

establish correct relations with the U. S. S. R. though she steadfastly refused to accept communism as her own way of life.

Of the several treaties and agreements concluded between the two neighbors, all were later to be violated by Moscow. The agreements in question were as follows:

(1) The Protocol of February 9, 1929, effecting the immediate enforcement of the Treaty of Paris of August 27, 1928 (the Kellogg Pact).

(2) The nonaggression pact between Poland and the U. S. S. R. of July 25, 1932. This agreement was extended, on May 5, 1934, for 10 years—until December 31, 1945.

(3) The Convention for the Definition of Aggression, signed at London July 3, 1933, between the U. S. S. R. and seven of its neighbors including Poland.

These were accompanied by several declarations reaffirming the above-mentioned non-aggression pact.

With Hitler's seizure of power in 1933 Poland's position became especially precarious as she found herself between two totalitarian powers. Both tried to induce Poland to join an alliance directed against the other. However, Polish foreign policy remained strictly within the terms of the non-aggression pacts concluded with Russia and, later in 1934, with Germany.

The Soviet Union's perfidious diplomatic intrigues with Germany in the spring of 1939 were revealed in the United States State Department publication, *Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-41*. The testimony of the Polish witnesses fully confirmed the information contained in that official American publication. Soviet diplomats made every effort to induce Hitler into a war with Poland. At the same time, the Soviet Union tried to strengthen Polish resistance by promising a friendly attitude toward her. Soviet leaders realized that if Germany attacked Poland, England and France would come to her aid and consequently a world war would break out. The Soviet Union carefully planned to remain on the sidelines, and to be paid for her neutrality with the Baltic States, half of Poland, and a substantial part of Rumania. The "capitalist bourgeois" and Fascist countries were to fight and weaken each other, while the still strong Soviet Union would simply wait for an opportunity to crush them all.

As a result of the Nazi imperialism and the Soviet intrigues, Poland was attacked by Germany on September 1, 1939. On September 17, while the Polish forces were engaged in a desperate fight against the overwhelming Nazi onslaught, the Red army invaded eastern Poland in accordance with the secret provisions of the Nazi-Soviet pact of non-aggression.

A secret protocol of the pact "assigned" the Baltic States, the eastern half of Poland, and Rumanian Bessarabia to the Soviet "sphere of interest."

From the time of the conclusion of the pact in Moscow on August 23, 1939, until June 1941, the Soviet Government did everything in its power to satisfy the Nazi rulers or, when possible, to exploit the Nazi-Soviet friendship. The time, the method, and the pretext of the Soviet invasion of Poland on September 17, 1939, and even the text of the Soviet declaration issued on that day had been secretly and previously agreed upon by the Nazi government.

In the first stage of the war, from September 1939 until June 22, 1941, the day of the Nazi attack on Russia, Soviet food and raw ma-



terials were delivered to Germany promptly and in abundant quantities. The collaboration and friendship went so far that frequently Moscow delivered to the Nazis those German Communists who before the war had sought refuge in the "proletarian paradise."

The German Gestapo and the Soviet NKVD likewise collaborated closely in an attempt to wipe out the Polish underground. Mr. Stefan Korbonski, the last head of the civilian underground in Poland; Gen. Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, former commander in chief of the underground home army; Gen. Tadeusz Pelczynski, his chief of staff; Col. Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki, Bor-Komorowski's chief of intelligence; and many others testified on this and supplied the committee with documentation. The Soviet attitude toward Poland at that time was best characterized by Molotov's report on October 8, 1939, to the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.:

One swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army, and then by the Red army and nothing was left of this ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty.

#### THE FIRST COMMUNIST ELECTIONS IN POLAND

The first Soviet-type "elections" took place soon after the Red army's invasion on September 17, 1939. Soviet troops, numbering more than 700,000, occupied 77,620 square miles, or 51.6 percent of the entire country. In this area lived 37.3 percent of the population, more than 12 million people, divided according to the following ethnical division:

Poles.....	4, 474, 000	Lithuanians.....	76, 000
Ukrainians.....	4, 494, 000	Jews.....	1, 045, 000
White Ruthenians.....	1, 349, 000	Others.....	134, 000
Russians.....	120, 000		

There were an additional million people who had fled Nazi-dominated Poland to seek refuge under the Soviet rule. Most of them indeed found "refuge." Within a few months they were on their way to forced labor camps in Russia.

On October 6, 1939, a Communist-controlled "election" was held, supposedly to elect the political representation of the conquered population and to decide the political future of the area.

The committee heard and read much testimony on the way the election was conducted. It was organized by the Soviet military and civil administration and controlled by special NKVD "organizers" sent from Moscow. The majority in the local electoral committees was usually in the hands of the Soviet officials. According to Moscow's *Izvestiia* of October 11, 1939, the Lwow committee, for the so-called "Western Ukraine," included seven Red army or NKVD officers (Begma, Gorbatenko, Grulenko, Gryshchuk, Lukin, Matsko, and Yeremenko), the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine (Grechukha) and a Soviet-Ukrainian writer, Korneychuk, the total number of committee members being 17. According to Moscow's *Pravda* of October 11, 1939, among 12 members of the Bialystok committee for the so-called "Western Byelorussia" there were: the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian S. S. R. (Natalevich), 2 deputies of the same Soviet (Mrs. Grekova and Pankov), and at least 3 Red army or NKVD officers (Gaysin, Karkeyev, and Spasov).

According to *Pravda* of October 22, 1939, 100,000 agitators were brought from the U. S. S. R. to the Polish White Ruthenian territories.

The candidates to be "elected" were not nominated by the electorate but were appointed by the Soviet authorities. In most cases they were unknown to the voters. Many of the candidates were members of the newly arrived Soviet administration. Molotov and Marshal Voroshilov headed the list of the "local delegates" in Krzemieniec. In other constituencies, Pomarenko, the secretary of the Soviet Byelorussian Communist Party, General Kolvaley, the commander of the Soviet Byelorussian front, the chairman of the Soviet Byelorussian Republic, and other high Soviet officials were the candidates.

According to Pravda of October 22, 1939, out of 921 candidates in "Western Byelorussia" there were only 110 Poles. Though the Poles in this area made up 40 percent of the population, they had only 11.9 percent of the candidates. In "Western Ukraine" where Poles formed 36.2 percent of the populace, there were only 402 Polish candidates out of a total of 1,500. Though Poles represented 52.4 percent of the population in the Province of Nowogrodek, only 5, or 2.2 percent appeared on the slate of 225 candidates. In the Province of Stanislawow where 21.1 percent of the residents were Polish, there were but 4 Poles out of a total of 313 candidates.

The votes were counted by regional committees secretly and the electorate had no means of checking the count. There was always the name of only one candidate on the ballot. The only way of expressing opposition was not to vote at all or to hand in an invalid ballot. However, the vote was compulsory and usually open. Most of the Soviet soldiers voted, as did many others who had no identity cards but were nonetheless put on the register. One eyewitness, Wladyslaw Stepien, stated in a hearing in Chicago, Ill., that in the Golasze Puszcza district in which he, himself, voted, more than half of the voters did not show up. However, the official result, as published by the Soviet authorities, stated that more than 90 percent of the population voted for the government candidate. Official returns for the whole Soviet-occupied territory showed that out of 7,539,466 entitled to vote, 7,106,277 voted.

When the newly "elected" Byelorussian and Ukrainian "National Assemblies" had their first sessions a few days later, on October 26 and 28, respectively, both passed resolutions asking for incorporation into the "Soviet family of nations."

On November 1 and 2, 1939, the fifth special session of the Supreme Council of the U. S. S. R. "agreed" to grant this request thereby "legalizing" the status of the provinces that had existed for 6 weeks. By the decree of November 29, 1939, all inhabitants of the area were "granted" Soviet citizenship.

#### SOVIET DEPORTATION OF POLES: 1939-41

Mass deportations to forced labor camps appear to be one of the most common characteristics of Communist rule. There is nothing in the background of the average American that will help him understand the dependence of a modern government on forced labor camps. Only after careful study of testimonies and written depositions from people who had been in the camps, and survived the misery of the mass deportations, did the members of the Committee come to believe the facts presented here as true. With the evidence provided by testimonies the committee can only conclude that the inhuman treatment, the misery of the deportees and slave laborers, the complete

disregard of the Communists for moral considerations, and the contempt for family ties far surpass any ancient forms of slavery.

The witnesses were many and from all walks of life—everyone of them testifying on the basis of his own experiences. Dr. Antoni Pajak, a Socialist, was deported for antidemocratic activities; Mrs. Jadwiga Maklakowicz, local commander of Girl Scouts, for coming from an “enemy environment”; Mrs. Maria Szeliga for her “nationalism”; Lucjan Blit, one of the leaders of the Jewish Bund, for crossing the frontier and anti-Soviet attitude; Rev. Włodzimierz Cienski, just for being a priest. Monsignor Włodzimierz Pieniacki was savagely tortured and imprisoned just for being a patriotic Pole—witness after witness was repeating the same tragic story of inhuman persecution, hatred, and destruction.

The Polish Embassy in the U. S. S. R. during the period from August 1941 to April 1943 carefully collected data concerning Polish deportees to Russia. The staff of Gen. Władysław Anders, formerly the commander in chief of the Polish Army formed in the U. S. S. R. in 1941, gathered archives which included information on forced labor camps in the Soviet Union.

Over 18,000 eyewitness testimonies had been collected from Poles who passed through jails, concentration camps, and forced labor camps in Russia. This unique collection is now in the Hoover Library on War, Revolution, and Peace in Stanford, Calif., under the title of “Anders’ Collection.” The committee had access to all the important data in this collection.

The committee was fortunate also in having many witnesses both from the staff of the former Polish Embassy in the U. S. S. R. and from General Anders’ Army. One witness was Mr. Adam Treszka, formerly of the Polish Embassy in Moscow, who was in charge of statistics concerning the Polish deportees. He and the other witnesses supplied the committee with detailed data.

In the 18- to 20-month period from October 1939 to June 1941, 1,692,000 Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, and White-Ruthenians were forcibly taken from their homes and deported to Russia. This included 230,000 soldiers and officers of the Polish Army, 990,000 civilians who were deported because of their “nationalistic bourgeois background,” 250,000 political “class enemies,” 210,000 Poles conscripted into the Red army and then sent deep into the Soviet Union and 12,000 other Poles gathered forcibly from the Baltic area. One hundred and sixty thousand children and adolescents were among the deportees.

About 14,000 regular and reserve officers—the cream of the Polish Nation—were separated from the 230,000 war prisoners in the winter of 1939–40. They were placed in three camps, Kozielsk, Ostashkow, and Starobielsk. A special committee of the Congress of the United States investigating in 1952 this chapter of the Polish tragedy known as the “Katyn massacre” concluded that without a doubt these Polish officers were murdered by the Soviets.

Out of all 1,692,000 deportees, only 114,500 were saved. According to the Polish-Soviet Pact of July 30, 1941, all Poles were to be released and the Polish Army was to be formed in Russia. Soon it was apparent that only a very small percentage of Poles were being released from forced labor camps and that the Soviet Government had no intention of tolerating a non-Communist Polish Army. In 1942, General Anders was allowed to take 114,500 persons out of Russia and to



transfer them to the Middle East. This figure included 77,000 soldiers and 37,500 civilian men, women, and children.

It was impossible for the committee to determine how many out of 1,500,000 Poles left in Russia have survived. There is a strong indication that those who were returned to Communist-controlled Poland after the war represented only a small minority. Most probably, more than one million Polish farmers and workers perished in slave camps or are still slaving in the "fatherland of the proletariat".

General Anders, who testified in London, is convinced that most of these Poles died of exhaustion and exposure in the slave camps.

Life in forced labor camps is such that usually an inmate cannot survive for more than a few years. In certain camps like Kolyma, in the northeastern part of the U. S. S. R. a human being cannot survive longer than a few months.

The inmates lived in the most primitive, unsanitary conditions. They worked 12 to 16 hours a day, without any remuneration—building roads, bridges, canals. They mined gold, cut wood, or worked in war factories.

It is evident to the committee that forced labor is an integral part of the Soviet system and that it serves two purposes: First, it takes away "unreliable" elements from society, and second, it uses them as slave labor to bolster the state's economy.

#### POLISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE ALLIED VICTORY IN WORLD WAR II

As the result of a combined Nazi-Soviet attack, Poland was defeated. However, her will to fight remained very much alive.

The Polish government-in-exile was formed in Paris in October 1939 with Wladyslaw Racziewicz as President of the Republic and Gen. Wladyslaw Sikorski as Prime Minister and commander in chief of the armed forces. All nations except the U. S. S. R. and the Axis Powers promptly recognized the Government as Poland's only legal governing body. An Army, Navy, and Air Force were re-created in France, and the fight of underground resistance was carried on in the homeland.

##### (a) *Abroad*

Shortly after the end of open fighting in the homeland General Sikorski formed a Polish Army in France. This army consisted of 4½ infantry divisions, an armored brigade, and the Carpathian Brigade—in all some hundred thousand well-trained men. The 1st and the 2d divisions took part in the Battle of France in 1940 and again in 1944 with the 1st Armored Division and the Parachute Brigade; the Carpathian Brigade fought in Norway and was the first to enter Narvik in the spring of 1940.

After the collapse of France, most of the Polish troops were evacuated to England.

Another Polish Army was organized in the second part of 1941. After the conclusion of the Soviet-Polish Treaty on July 30, 1941, about 114,000 Poles were released from forced labor camps and prisons in Russia. They were put under the authority of the Polish Government in London which delegated General Anders, until then a Soviet prisoner himself, as the commander in chief.

Within a short time, an army of some 75,000 men was formed from the released Poles and transferred from the Soviet Union to the Middle East. This army later took part in the battles in Africa, Italy, France, and Belgium. By 1944, it had grown to be a force of more than 100,000 men.

*(b) In the homeland*

Along with the fighting of Polish armed forces abroad, a powerful underground operated inside Poland.

The committee was fortunate to receive written and oral testimonies, both in Europe and in this country, from many military and civilian members of the Polish underground state. The witnesses supplied ample documentation, the veracity of which cannot be doubted. The knowledge of the structure, character, and operations of this organization appeared necessary in order to understand Polish-Soviet relations in the later stage of the war, from 1943-45.

The government-in-exile exercised its authority within Poland through the underground. Liaison through radio, special couriers, and parachutes worked efficiently throughout the war. The structure and the nature of the underground insured the execution of the official Government policy. While the government-in-exile had all the authority of a genuine government, the underground in Poland formed a genuine state with the essential executive, legislative, and judicial branches. It had its own budget, collected money, managed its own schools and universities, as well as carried out sentences imposed by the secret courts.

The underground state was headed by the council of ministers under the chairmanship of the government's delegate who held the formal title of vice premier of the government-in-exile. The members of the council represented Poland's chief political parties: National Democratic, Peasant, Socialist, and Christian Labor. Those four parties represented probably more than 80 percent of the population.

The government delegate's office was divided into departments which corresponded to ministries in London. More than 30,000 officials maintained branch offices in a nationwide secret network—a unique phenomenon in an underground administration.

The armed forces of the underground state, called the home army, also had an official character with the power to enlist, mobilize, and requisition. It consisted of 400,000 members, including 100,000 women.

For five and a half years the home army fought a relentless struggle against the Nazis. It destroyed or damaged 6,988 locomotives, ruined 17,037 railway cars, attacked or derailed 721 German troop trains, destroyed 1,113 German transports, carried on 885 acts of sabotage to railway lines, and blew up 38 bridges. Units of the home army killed thousands of Germans, set fire to German stores, disorganized German supply lines, destroyed roads, organized acts of sabotage, even in Germany itself, and raided German frontier positions.

The activities of the home army compelled the Nazis to concentrate in Poland more than half a million troops and 60,000 Gestapo men, in addition to SS units. According to official Nazi reports, 1 in every 8 German transports bound for the eastern front never reached its destination.

POLISH-SOVIET RELATIONS: JULY 30, 1941—APRIL 25, 1943

On June 22, 1941, Hitler attacked Russia.

By that time the Poles had learned from tragic experience what Communist rule meant to the enslaved nations; western democracies had yet to learn this bitter truth. This must be kept in mind in order to appreciate the extremely difficult position of the Polish Government in London when Soviet Russia joined the Western Powers as an ally.

General Sikorski, Prime Minister of the Polish Government, made a daring contribution to the Allied cause when he concluded the Polish-Soviet Agreement on July 30, 1941.

By this agreement the U. S. S. R. recognized that the Soviet-German treaties of 1939, which pertained to territorial changes in Poland, had lost their validity. Diplomatic relations were resumed. Both Governments undertook to give one another aid and support in the war against Nazi Germany. It was agreed that a Polish Army would be formed on the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

An additional protocol stipulated that the Soviet Government would liberate all Polish citizens who had been deprived of their freedom, either as prisoners of war or on other grounds.

At the ceremony at which this document was signed, the British Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, handed General Sikorski a note assuring him that His Majesty's Government did not recognize any territorial changes which had occurred in Poland since August 1939.

At first the outlook seemed hopeful. The Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U. S. S. R. issued on August 12, 1941, a formal amnesty decree, freeing a considerable number of Polish citizens from forced labor camps and prisons. However, as time went on, it became apparent that the Soviet authorities still detained thousands of deportees in spite of Premier Stalin's assertion that the amnesty extended to all Polish citizens without exception.

The difficulty of contacting and helping Poles scattered about Russia—many of whom urgently needed medicine, clothes, and food—presented another complicated problem. Despite repeated promises, a list of Polish deportees was never obtained from Soviet authorities.

The first steps General Anders took to organize Polish units met with an immediate response; the release of Polish soldiers raised the number of volunteers to more than 46,000 within a few months. An unexpected cut in equipment and food rations, however, proved a severe setback in the task of organizing the Polish Army. The search for the missing officers came to naught; the vague answers of the Soviets to questions asked by the Polish Ambassadors, first Stanislaw Kot and later Tadeusz Romer, General Anders, and his staff cast a deepening shadow on this tragic riddle.

Alarmed by such difficulties in the implementation of the July agreement, General Sikorski, on his own initiative, went to Moscow early in December 1941 for a meeting with Stalin.

Earlier, the Polish Embassy had registered a complaint that Polish citizens in one district had been conscripted for the Red Army. On



the eve of General Sikorski's arrival in Moscow, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs gave this incredible explanation: The Soviet Government considered as Soviet citizens all Polish nationals of Ukrainian, White Ruthenian, and Jewish origin who on November 1 and 2, 1939, resided in the territories detached at that time from Poland. In what the Soviets considered a special gesture, they exempted from these persons of Polish origin.

This announcement came as a great shock to the Poles.

The discrimination on the grounds of national origin dealt a severe blow to the July agreement; it was an attempt to reduce Polish control, even over the released deportees, and an indirect maneuver to revert to the Ribbentrop-Molotov treaty as the basis for deciding territorial questions.

Still the Polish Government did not give up hope that with time it would be possible to collaborate with the Soviets.

In his Moscow talks, Sikorski stressed first of all the necessity of fighting the common enemy, and the urgency of building up the Polish Army in the U. S. S. R., as well as relief facilities for the deportees. He received from Stalin firm assurances of good will and cooperation.

The improvement in Polish-Soviet relations after General Sikorski's visit proved to be short-lived. Three months later, in March, there was a drastic cut in food rations for the Polish Army. This happened despite Stalin's previous assurances. It soon became obvious that the Soviet Government was opposed to the creation of any army with national and sovereign character such as had been formed by Poles in France.

General Anders' accounts of his experiences in Soviet Russia up to the time his troops were evacuated to Iran in 1942 are an invaluable source of firsthand information with regard to the events mentioned above.

A whole series of hostile moves on the part of Soviet authorities marked the summer of 1942. By this time substantial relief shipments for Poles, including supplies sent by charitable agencies in the United States and Great Britain as well as lend-lease aid, began arriving at Russian ports. These supplies were promptly distributed among Poles with the assistance of delegates of the Polish Embassy appointed in accordance with the agreement of December 23, 1941.

By 1942 the whole relief setup was disrupted by the NKVD as scores of Polish relief workers were imprisoned. Extensive Polish diplomatic correspondence of that period reveals that thousands of Polish citizens of Jewish faith and of Ukrainian and Byelorussian origin were jailed again for refusing to accept Soviet passports. Others were forcibly conscripted into the Red army.

It was significant that these drastic steps were taken soon after Molotov had concluded the 20 year Anglo-Soviet alliance, and had negotiated a lend-lease agreement with the United States.

The pattern of Soviet duplicity was becoming more and more evident. Respect for international obligations and for the rights of smaller nations was displayed only as long as it served to strengthen the Kremlin's position with the Western Powers. When the tide had begun to turn in Russia's favor—Soviet attitude changed too.

In March 1943, German occupation units stationed in the Smolensk region discovered mass graves of Polish officers. The Soviet Government, claiming that the Polish Government's request for an investigation by the international Red Cross was an unfriendly act, broke off diplomatic relations on April 25, 1943. This was only a pretext, for the Soviet Government already had far-reaching plans in store for Poland.

#### THE ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNIST REGIME IN POLAND

The committee was fortunate in receiving testimonies, not only from Poles who were opposing communism within Poland, but also from several former Communists. The latter were especially well informed about the origins and character of the Communist regime in Poland. The most important of them were Mrs. Irena Born, who testified in London; and Mr. Jozef Swiatlo, until recently a high official of the Ministry of Security in Warsaw, who testified in Milwaukee, Wis.

To understand fully the character of the present Communist regime in Poland, one must first of all realize that communism traditionally was extremely unpopular among the Polish people.

There were no Communists in the first Parliament of 1919-22; there were only 6 Communists in the Parliament of 1922-24, 7 in 1928-30, and 4 in 1930-35, respectively, representing 1.4 percent, 1.6 percent, and 0.9 percent of the Parliament membership.

The origins of the present regime in Poland go back to the years 1919-20.

In the summer of 1920, at the peak of the Bolshevik offensive directed against Warsaw, a group of Polish Communists was organized behind the Russian lines. Working under the strict discipline of the newly created Comintern, they were to act as a Moscow-sponsored government in Poland if the Bolsheviks should win. Just before the decisive Battle of Warsaw the group proclaimed itself the "Polish Revolutionary Provisional Government." Its most prominent leaders were Felix Dzierzynski, who was to become the notorious head of the Cheka (later renamed NKVD and presently known as MVD), Felix Kon, Julian Marchlewski and Alfred Lampe.

The Polish military victory in the middle of August 1920 saved the nation—at least for the time being.

A comparison of texts shows to what an extent the Bolshevik propaganda line of 1920 resembled their line of 1939 in appealing to the Poles:



BOLSHEVIK PROCLAMATION OF AUGUST 1920      SOVIET PROCLAMATION OF SEPTEMBER 17, 1939

Polish Soldiers. \* \* \* The Red Army entering Polish territory is not guided by imperialist greed. It brings the working people of Poland help to fight for liberation from under the yoke of the nobility and the bourgeoisie. It is fully conscious that only a workers' and peasants' Poland can protect Soviet Russia from the greed of Polish and foreign imperialist aggressors. Fighting for its own freedom it also fights for ours. We extend our welcome to the Red Army who is not our enemy but a brother happier than ourselves because he has already been liberated. Our main task at present is to join forces with the Red Army and jointly conquer our common enemy. This is our duty towards the working people of Poland \* \* \*

\* \* \* To deeds, comrades! Fulfill your duty! Proletarians unite with proletarians against exploiters. Let a Polish Red Army keep pace with the Russian Red Army in the grand struggle for the liberation of the working people!

Be quick, workers and peasants. We call you to a great task, to the final struggle against the world of exploitation!

Soldiers of the Polish Army!

The Polish landlords and bourgeois Government which has dragged you into an adventurers' war, has shamelessly disintegrated. It turned out incapable of governing the country and of organizing defense. \* \* \* The Polish Army has suffered a severe defeat from which it is unable to disentangle itself. Death from starvation and destruction threatens your wives, children, brothers and sisters.

Do not resist the Red Army of Workers and Peasants. Your resistance will not be of any avail to you, and will expose you to destruction. We are coming not as your conquerors but as your class brethren and liberators from the big landlords' and capitalists' oppression.

The great and invincible Red Army brings the working people brotherhood and a happy life inscribed on its banners.

Soldiers of the Polish Army! Do not shed blood in vain, in defense of the interests of the landlords and the capitalists, alien to you \* \* \*. Give up weapons! Come over to the Red Army. Your freedom and life are assured.

There was no official Communist Party in Poland at the outbreak of World War II. Because of its internal rifts and, as a result of "great purges" in the U. S. S. R., it was dissolved by the Comintern in 1938.

The nucleus of the Communist Party was recreated at the end of 1939 at Lwow which at that time was occupied by the Soviets. An "Alliance of Former Polish Communists" and a "Union of Former Political Prisoners" were formed. In order to select talented writers and propagandists, a political monthly, *New Horizons*, was set up under the editorship of two gifted Communists: Mrs. Wanda Wasilewska (the wife of Mr. Korneyczuk, later Foreign Minister for the Soviet Ukraine), and Mrs. Helen Usiyevich (the daughter of a prominent Polish Communist of 1920, Felix Kon, mentioned before). In time, the editorial staff of the monthly was strengthened by Jerzy Putrament (later Polish Communist Ambassador to Paris), Jerzy Borejsza-Goldman (later the chief of Communist propaganda in Poland), Alfred Lampe (Soviet agent and a member of the Communist set up in 1920), and Adam Wazyk (Wagman).

After the Nazi attack on Russia in June 1941, *New Horizons* was discontinued to be resumed at Kuybyshev on May 5, 1942, as a fortnightly.

Another kind of Soviet activity centered on the Polish war prisoners taken to Russia in September 1939. From the beginning of their captivity they were subjected to Communist propaganda. Excellent living conditions were offered to those who would "collaborate";

a luxurious villa at Malakhovka, managed by the NKVD, was at their disposal. Special indoctrination courses were carried on there.

Of more than 14,000 Polish officers, only 74 were "converted" by the NKVD. They were headed by Zygmunt Berling, then a lieutenant colonel (later, for a short time commander in chief of the Communist-controlled Polish Army).

In the winter of 1941-42, the Polish Communist Party was reestablished in the greatest secrecy by the Comintern under the name of the Polish Workers Party. The unpopularity of communism among the Poles made the change of name necessary. Four experienced Comintern agents were among the founders: Boleslaw Bierut (later Communist President of Poland and presently secretary general of the ruling party in Poland), Kazimierz Hardy, Kulesza Lutomski, and Mrs. Kwiatkowska. Other members included Stanislaw Kotek-Agroszewski (later Minister of the Department of Public Administration), Szymon Zolna and Wladyslaw Gomulka (subsequently Vice Premier and only recently removed as secretary general of the party).

The staff of the party was secretly parachuted into Poland. The main task of the party was to infiltrate the Polish underground, setting up cells for the later seizure of power, denouncing members of the underground to the Gestapo, and setting up new underground groups, apparently non-Communist, but actually under strict Communist control.

Direct Kremlin control of the activities of the Polish Workers Party was exercised, first by a Moscow agent named Nowotko, and later by another named Finder. Wladyslaw Gomulka finally emerged as the secretary general of the party. Although he was not trusted by Moscow, he was very popular among Polish Communists.

The main propaganda weapon of this group was radio station "Kosciuszko" which broadcast in Polish from the U. S. S. R.

In a relatively short time, the Communist agents succeeded in infiltrating several underground organizations, although they were unable to infiltrate the official underground state and the home army. They also created some new organizations which, by names, resembled the existing patriotic underground groups. The better known among them were the "Polish Workers Socialist Party", "Committee of National Initiative", "Non-Party Democrats", "The Opposition Group of the Peasant Party", "Sword and Plow", "The People's Guard", and "The People's Militia".

Although these groups had only small followings, their existence was widely propagandized, both in underground Poland and abroad. They were presented as genuine, patriotic, non-Communist organizations.

Concomitant with the operation of The Polish Workers Party in the homeland, a Union of Polish Patriots was created in Moscow on March 1, 1943, presided over by the already mentioned Mrs. Wanda Wasilewska. The most important members of this organization were Boleslaw Drobner (expelled before the war from the Polish Socialist Party for his Communist activities), Stefan Jedrychowski (a well-known Communist), Aleksander Zawadzki (a colonel of the NKVD), Stanislaw Skrzyszewski (before the war, a schoolmaster in Poland and a Communist), Jerzy Sztachelski (a Communist from Wilno), Stanislaw Radkiewicz (a Communist organizer in prewar Poland) and Hilary Minc (a prewar fellow traveler who later became a fervent

Communist). Among the original members of the Union of Polish Patriots, there were 4 Soviet nationals, 1 "collaborator" (Berling), 5 Communists, 1 Communist sympathizer, and 3 who joined the organization under pressure.

As soon as the Union of Polish Patriots was set up and properly propagandized all over the world as representing the Polish nation in the U. S. S. R., the Soviet Union broke diplomatic relations with the Polish Government in London. This happened on April 25, 1943. Six weeks later Communist organs announced that a Convention of Polish Patriots took place in Moscow. Sixty-six delegates, whose names were not disclosed, supposedly represented all "Polish political democratic and progressive parties." The convention condemned the government-in-exile and promised to fight "hand in hand" with the Red army for a "democratic and progressive Poland."

Almost simultaneously, a Communist-controlled Polish Army came into being in the U. S. S. R. with Berling at its head. Berling's Soviet military superior was Major General Bewziuk, while political control was entrusted to Zawadzki, the NKVD colonel mentioned above. The recruits for the army were supplied by compulsory conscription among Polish war prisoners who had not been allowed to leave Russia with General Anders in 1942.

Throughout 1943 and the first part of 1944, the Union of Polish Patriots was presented by worldwide Communist propaganda as the spokesman, not only for the Poles in Russia, but also for the Polish nation itself. At that time the Communists argued that since the Soviet Union broke diplomatic relations with the Polish Government in London, and since the Union of Polish Patriots apparently had good relations with the Soviet Government, the Western Allies should shift their support to that organization.

On January 30, 1944, radio station "Kosciuszko," in a broadcast from Moscow, announced that a "Home National Council" had secretly come into existence in Poland. The broadcast described it as a kind of underground parliament to which the "Peasant Party, the Socialist Party, the Polish Workers' Party and other democratic groups" had sent their representatives. In all territories "liberated" by the Red army, elections were supposedly being carried on "with the most democratic methods." The Home National Council, praising its own "democratic" character, proclaimed its friendship to the U. S. S. R. and its support of Great Britain and the United States. It branded the government-in-exile as an "emigré Fascist clique rejected by the Polish people." The council's chairman was Bierut; its vice chairman was Gomulka, both described as "progressive liberals."

When the Red army crossed the Molotov-Ribbentrop line on July 22, 1944, a Polish Committee of National Liberation was established at Chelm and a short time later moved to Lublin. Under the protection of the Red army, it assumed the "legal and provisional executive authority." From that time on, whatever territory was "liberated" by the Red army complete governmental power was placed in the hands of that group. Police, courts, information media, transportation, communication, the army—all came under its control.

An investigation of the membership of the Polish Committee of National Liberation and the National Council of the Homeland revealed that most of the people in them consisted of leaders of the Union of Polish Patriots, members of the Polish Workers Party and



leaders of the "phony" groups mentioned above that became part of underground through the Polish Workers Party.

On December 31, 1944, the Polish Committee of National Liberation proclaimed itself as the provisional government of Poland and the next day, the Soviet Union formally recognized it as such. An alliance between Poland and the U. S. S. R. was concluded and the eastern half of Poland was "ceded" to Russia.

Within a short time, the so-called "provisional government of Poland" obtained complete control of the country. With the support of the Red army it carried on the ruthless liquidation of the home army and the civilian underground organizations. But for a few non-Communists who were forced under pressure to join the "provisional government," Communist agents had absolute control. Thus, the Kremlin's carefully planned domination of Poland, started in 1920, met with success in 1945. The same names which appeared on the rosters of the Alliance of Former Polish Communists and the Union of Former Polish Prisoners of 1939, the Polish Workers' Party of 1942, the Union of Polish Patriots of 1943, the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 1944, all reappeared in the provisional government lists. With few exceptions, they were longtime Communists and most of them were trusted Moscow agents.

It was this Communist group which indirectly was recognized at the Yalta Conference as the de facto government of Poland with a recommendation of being "broadened" by an inclusion of "democratic Poles from Poland and abroad." The Polish Government in London, still officially recognized by the United States, Great Britain, and all other countries except the Axis Powers and the U. S. S. R. was ignored.

There were voices in addition to that of the Polish Government in London which warned President Roosevelt and the American Government against Soviet tactics concerning Poland. The voice of witness Charles Rozmarek, president of the Polish-American Congress, was one of the most forceful and prominent.

#### LIQUIDATION OF THE UNDERGROUND

When the Red army crossed the prewar Polish-Soviet frontier in January 1944 in its victorious drive against the Nazis, the Poles had to make a serious decision: What should be the attitude of the underground?

After much discussion among leaders in London and in Poland, it was decided that the home army should fight the Germans to the end and should help the Red army wherever it could. It was also decided that once the Red army would take any territory, the home army's secret detachments should come into the open, report to the Red commanders, declare their allegiance to the Government-in-exile, and offer their cooperation. If the good will of the Soviets was demonstrated, the secret civilian authorities would follow the same plan.

Many former members and leaders of the Polish home army testified, both in the United States and in Europe, before this committee. Their testimonies invariably revealed bad faith, duplicity, and cruelty on the part of the Red "liberators." Usually the Red commander would be secretly approached by a representative of the home army from a nearby area still under Nazi power. The contact would be pleasant and comradely and each would promise full cooperation to

the other. The home army units would execute, as well as they could, the task assigned to them. Once the Nazis were beaten or had withdrawn, the home army detachments would come into the open and, headed by their leaders, would report to the Red commanders. Usually this was the last time their neighbors saw or heard from them. The Communists would spread rumors that they had been assigned to duties in other areas. Only much later it would become clear what had happened. After a warm reception, the officers would be separated from the troops, sent to jail or executed on the spot and the troops would be incorporated into the Communist-controlled army. Not a single home army detachment was allowed to remain free.

In some cases, the Soviet attitude was particularly perverse. "They involved us in operations against the German Army, let us be surrounded by the Germans, promised help, but, at a crucial moment, left us completely alone to be exterminated by the enemy," Capt. Adolf Pilch, a local home army commander in one of the eastern areas, told the committee at a London hearing. He said he had saved himself only by a near miracle. The same kind of experiences were reported to the committee by Maj. Michal Morski, a local home army commander, Group Capt. Franciszek Rybka, a leader of the Nowogrodek military unit, by Maj. Tadeusz Klimowski, Chief of Staff of the 27th Infantry Division in the Wolyn area, and by several other witnesses. During the first months of 1944, Soviet authorities hanged 20 Polish commanders and shot 3 of them solely because they had declared their loyalty to the Polish Government in London. In the Lublin area alone, more than 50,000 persons were arrested between July 1944 and January 1945.

#### THE WARSAW UPRISING (AUGUST 1, 1944—OCTOBER 2, 1944)

The committee carefully investigated the matter of the Warsaw uprising, taking both written and oral testimonies and also studying the supplied documentation. The witnesses included Mr. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, former Prime Minister of the Polish Government-in-Exile; General Bor-Komorowski, Commander in Chief of the Home Army; his Chief of Staff, Gen. Tadeusz Pelczynski; Chief of Intelligence, Col. Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki; commander of the Warsaw Military District at the time of the uprising, Gen. A. Monter-Chrusciel; Col. Andrzej Pomian, liaison officer with London; Mrs. Janina Pronaszko, Bor-Komorowski's secretary; and several others. Mr. Stefan Korbonski, the last official head of the underground state, gave testimony in Chicago, Ill. The only 2 survivors of the infamous Moscow trial of the 16 Polish leaders were among other witnesses heard by the committee: in Chicago, Mr. Kazimierz Baginski, who had been a prominent political leader in the Peasant Party, and in London, Mr. Zbigniew Stypulkowski, one of the leaders of the National Democratic Party.

Valuable testimony was also given by Mr. Jozef Swiatlo, formerly a high Communist official in Poland, and at the time of the Warsaw uprising, a political officer in the Communist-controlled Polish Army.

By the end of July 1944 the mobile patrols of the Red army approached Warsaw's suburbs in their offensive. Only the Vistula River separated them from the city. The Soviets began urging the people of Warsaw to help the Red army by rising against the Germans.

They conveyed this plea through the radio, press, pamphlets, and every other means of communication at their disposal.

On July 29 Moscow broadcast a pathetic appeal to Warsaw, later repeated several times by the Polish-speaking "Kosciuszko" station:

Appeal to Warsaw: Fight the Germans! No doubt Warsaw already hears the guns of the battle which is soon to bring her liberation \* \* \*

For Warsaw, which did not yield, but fought, the hour of action has already arrived. The Germans no doubt will try to defend themselves in Warsaw. It is therefore a hundred times more necessary than ever to remember that in the flood of Hitlerite destruction all is lost that is not saved by active effort, that by direct struggle in the streets of Warsaw, in its homes, factories, and stores, we not only hasten the moment of final liberation, but also save the nation's property and the lives of our brothers.

On another occasion "Kosciuszko" station appealed even more strongly:

People of Warsaw, to arms! The whole population should gather round the National Council and the underground army. Attack the Germans \* \* \* assist the Red army in crossing the Vistula. Give information and show the best fords. The more than a million inhabitants ought to become an army of a million men fighting for liberation and destroying the German invaders.

The Polish Government in London and the leadership of the underground in Poland had to make again a fateful decision. All the high civilian and military authorities of the underground were in Warsaw, as were the best of its armed members. The Nazis were mobilizing men to build fortifications and mining the city for destruction. Everybody realized that if the underground did not respond to the Soviet appeals, Red propaganda would brand it as nonexistent, as a hoax, and would be free to destroy it. With hatred toward the Nazis at a fever pitch, the Poles wanted passionately to fight them. It became difficult to restrain the thousands of underground soldiers who saw the opportunity to liberate the capital with their own hands. The nearness of the Soviet forces, as well as the Soviet appeals, gave hope that once the uprising broke out, the Red army would rush to support it.

At 5 p. m. on August 1, 1944, the streets in Warsaw resounded with explosions. The uprising had started. Within a few hours, the center of the city was free. Within a couple of days, the whole city was in the hands of insurgents and a Polish administration was operating openly. The joy of the population was boundless—Warsaw was ready to welcome the Red army as a free capital of a free nation.

As soon as the Poles succeeded in driving the Germans out, the Soviet guns became silent, and the Red offensive came to an abrupt stop. A few days later the people of Warsaw were shocked to see the withdrawal of the Red army from the outskirts of the city.

The Prime Minister of the government-in-exile, witness Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, at that time in Moscow, informed Stalin that Warsaw had responded to the Soviet appeals. He asked for help. Stalin at first denied the news, saying it was only Polish propaganda. After a few days, when the uprising became known all over the world, he bluntly refused any help and later even branded the command of the uprising as anti-Soviet, reactionary, Fascist and irresponsible. The unfortunate city was left alone to face the whole Nazi war machine. To the amazement of the world, it did just that for 63 days. The Western Allies, England and the United States, answering requests for help, rushed air missions with food and ammunition. Soon,



however, it became apparent that landing facilities were needed on Soviet-controlled territory since it was extremely difficult to carry on round-trip missions. Despite personal appeals from Churchill and Roosevelt, Stalin refused to provide land bases for the Allied planes.

According to Mr. Jozef Swiatlo, every man in Berling's Communist-controlled Polish Army wanted to join in the fight for Warsaw. Only a few units were allowed to do so. These detachments, given neither support nor cover by Red artillery, were left to perish in a hopeless struggle.

The ruthless rulers of Russia had decided to use Nazi hands to destroy the nerve center of the Polish leadership. By October 2, there was no water to drink; no horse, dog, nor cat to eat; no ammunition. Not a house escaped unburned; not a street was recognizable. Rubble lay where before "Little Paris," as the Poles used to call their capital, pulsed with life. Over 250,000 people perished, including 40,000 active members of the underground. Those who survived had to be evacuated from the burning and infested ruins. The Soviet commander who carried on the diabolical orders of the Kremlin was Marshal Rokossovsky. A few years later, Moscow was to send him to Poland as a "Pole." Today, he is "marshal" of Poland, commander in chief of the Polish armed forces, and the key man in the Polish Government in Warsaw. Recently he was given a top position in the military organization of European satellite armies.

#### THE TRIAL OF THE 16 POLISH UNDERGROUND LEADERS IN MOSCOW, JUNE 1945

The systematic liquidation of the home army members of the civilian underground throughout all of Poland was to deprive Poland of all elements—active, patriotic, and experienced in underground fighting. The Warsaw uprising was to break the nation's spirit. The Soviet leaders, however, had further plans.

When the Red army entered Warsaw, in January 1945, the head of the underground, the members of the Secret Council of Ministers, the commander in chief of the home army, as well as the highest leaders of the political parties, survived and continued to operate in the strictest secrecy. It was evident that as long as they were free, the Communist rulers could not be sure of their position and success.

The activities of the underground leaders were not concealed by the government-in-exile although their identities were kept secret.

On May 5, 1945, the official Soviet Agency, Tass, announced that a group of the Polish underground leaders were arrested by the Soviet authorities "for their diversionary activities directed against the Soviet Union." Molotov, at that time in San Francisco, confirmed the information.

The British delegation to the San Francisco Conference issued on the same day an official communique, which read, in part:

\* \* \* Mr. Eden and Mr. Stettinius \* \* \* expressed grave concern to Mr. Molotov at receiving this most disquieting information \* \* \*, and asked him to obtain a full explanation concerning the arrest of the Polish leaders, a complete list of their names, and news of their present whereabouts.

The Anglo-American protests and interventions were in vain and soon the public trial was announced by the Soviet Government. The trial took place in Moscow between June 18 and 21, 1945.

Besides the two survivors of this trial, Mr. Baginski and Mr. Stypulkowski, who were mentioned as witnesses above, the committee was fortunate in getting the testimony of several others who had personal experience or direct knowledge of events in connection with the Soviet arrest of 16 leaders.

The facts, established by the committee, are as follows: After the Yalta Conference, a Council of Ambassadors was created to bring about a coalition government in Poland, meaning a coalition between the existing Communist regime and "other democratic Poles from Poland and abroad." It was assumed from the very beginning, at least by the American and British Governments, that the most prominent leaders of the non-Communist Polish underground, at that time still in Poland and in hiding, would eventually enter the coalition.

During the second half of February 1945, the Polish Government disclosed to the British and American authorities, for transmission to Moscow, the names and whereabouts of the Polish Vice Premier and Government delegate for the homeland, and of the three members of the Home Council of Ministers. In passing this information on to Moscow, the two Governments gave assurance that they would do everything necessary to ensure the safety of the Polish leaders.

A few days later, the Polish Vice Premier and the last commander of the disbanded home army received an invitation, through indirect channels, from Colonel Pimenov of the Soviet NKVD to attend a conference with Colonel General Ivanov, a representative of the high command of the First White Ruthenian Front. This invitation was confirmed in writing on March 10. The full text of Colonel Pimenov's letter is as follows:

*To the Government's Delegate in Poland, M. Jankowski:*

My good intentions and modest aims which I hope will meet with your full support and appreciation are limited to one thing only—namely, to help you to meet in the next few days the representative of the High Command of the First White Ruthenian Front, Col.-Gen. Ivanov. I am, of course, aware of the difficulties of this action. But realizing its absolute necessity and its immense importance—I cannot show this at length in this short letter—I am of the opinion that this meeting between you and Col.-Gen. Ivanov may and, of course, should, settle matters which it is altogether doubtful can be settled quickly in any other way. Mutual comprehension and confidence will allow the settling of very important problems and will prevent their becoming more acute.

I also request M. Jankowski to excuse the difficulties in bringing about this meeting, as indeed, the dates fixed for this purpose with Col.-Gen. Ivanov have long since passed. But I do hope that Col.-Gen. Ivanov will be courteous and will take into consideration my arguments for holding this meeting and that it will take place in the next few days. For my part, as an officer of the Red army who has been entrusted with such a greatly important mission, I guarantee to you, under my word as an officer, that from that moment your fate will be in my hands and that after your arrival at our quarters you will be absolutely safe.

I reckon on our early meeting and I send you my regards. Please inform me immediately of your decision.

On order,

PIMENOV, Colonel of the Guards.

Pruszkow, March 6th, 1945.

A similar letter was sent by Colonel Pimenov to General Okulicki, at that time commander in chief of the home army, and later an identical invitation was sent to other leaders of Polish political parties. Only later did it transpire that these invitations were issued without the knowledge of the British and American Ambassadors.

In introductory conversations with the Vice Premier, Colonel Pimenov declared that among the political aims of the meeting was



"the clarification of the atmosphere and the coming into the open of the democratic Polish parties in order that they may take part in the general current of the democratic forces of independent Poland."

After the Polish representatives had expressed a desire to hold direct consultations with the Polish Government Colonel Pimenov announced that the Soviet authorities had agreed to permit 12 of the Polish leaders to travel by air to London. Then the delegates were to return to Poland for further conversations.

In accordance with the Soviet invitation, the Vice Premier Jankowski, chairman of the Underground Parliament Puazk, and the commander of the home army, General Okulicki, presented themselves at General Ivanov's headquarters on March 27. The following day the other 3 members of the Home Council of Ministers and 8 representatives of the main political parties did likewise. None of these men ever returned and nothing further was heard from them.

Not until May 5, 1945, was a statement issued concerning the missing leaders.

They were kept in jail for several weeks and subjected to brain washing, the technical details of which were vividly revealed by Mr. Stypulkowski in the London hearings. Their sentences ranged from 10 years of prison to 4 months. Three men were acquitted.

With the Moscow trial, the organized underground opposition to the Communist rule was broken up. Almost simultaneously, a new chapter in the Polish tragedy began: the period of "coalition government."

#### SITUATION IN POLAND AFTER THE YALTA AGREEMENT

At the Yalta Conference (February 4-11, 1945) President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill, and Marshal Stalin agreed that with some minor changes the Soviet incorporation of the eastern half of Poland should be recognized without delay as permanent and legal. They also agreed that the "provisional government" operating in Poland should be "reorganized" on "a broader democratic basis" by including some "democratic" and unidentified Poles "from Poland and abroad."

The Yalta decisions were made without consulting the Polish government-in-exile, at the time still officially recognized by the United States and Great Britain as representing the Polish nation.

Before the Conference the Polish Government sent a memorandum to the British and American Governments demanding Poland's right to independence and pointing out that the Polish-Soviet territorial disputes should be decided later at the Peace Conference in accordance with the Atlantic Charter. The Government-in-exile received no reply to this, nor did they get an answer when after the Conference they protested the Yalta decisions.

As a result of the "reorganization" of the Communist regime in Poland a new provisional government of national unity was to be formed under the supervision of Messrs. V. Molotov (for the U. S. S. R.), A. Clark Kerr (for Great Britain), and Averell Harriman (for the United States).

Subsequent to the Yalta decisions a group of Polish political leaders, at that time not connected with the government-in-exile, agreed to return from London to Poland in order to take part in the new government. The most prominent among them were: Witness Stanislaw

Mikolajczyk, a former Prime Minister of the Government-in-exile and the chairman of the Peasant Party; Karol Popiel, one of the leaders of the Christian Labor Party, and Jan Stanczyk, a Socialist.

The new coalition government was formed in Moscow on June 21, 1945, the same day on which the 16 Polish leaders were convicted by a Soviet court only a few blocks away. Out of 21 Cabinet posts, all but 3 positions were held by the Communists or Communist followers. Bierut was to assume the position of President of the Republic.

On July 5, 1945, Great Britain and the United States withdrew their recognition of the Polish Government-in-exile which, however, did not cease its existence.

The Allies made their recognition of the new government subject to a condition which provided for:

\* \* \* holding of free and unfettered elections, as soon as possible, on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot in which all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and put forward candidates.

There were many witnesses who testified from personal experience with regard to the political situation in Poland after June 1945. The testimony of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk the Vice Prime Minister in Poland from July 1945 to January 1947 was of a particular importance.

With information it has already received, the committee was able to detect the following methods used by the Warsaw regime during the years 1945 through 1947 to impose their will on the Polish people:

1. In order to confuse Polish and Allied public opinion, the Communists set up several "phony" political parties which they secretly controlled. They usually went under names of traditional prewar democratic parties. Although they used democratic slogans, they invariably accused the truly democratic leaders as "traitors" or "foreign agents." These groups, together with the Polish Workers Party, formed a so-called "Government bloc."

Mikolajczyk found, upon his return to Warsaw, that there was a "Peasant Party," which, although it had no relation to the traditional Peasant Party of which he was a chairman, was nevertheless extremely active. The same applied to the Polish Socialist Party, Christian Labor Party, and a few others.

2. The Polish National Democratic Party, one of the most popular in the prewar Poland, was outlawed as "reactionary and nationalistic."

3. Attempts to re-create prewar political parties, free of Communist control, were denied by the Government's Communist majority. The few non-Communist members of the Cabinet had no voice whatsoever in the matter.

4. Mikolajczyk's prewar Peasant Party was the only one permitted to be re-created. Since, however, the party's name had been adopted by the Communist group, the new party had to be renamed the "Polish Peasant Party." It was that group which carried on the political activities directed against the Communist abuses openly and "legally." Since it was the only non-Communist-controlled party allowed to carry on, it soon gained the support of all Polish elements willing to risk open opposition of communism.

5. The creation of a coalition government and the open electoral campaign brought into the open most of the democratic anti-Communist forces. Tragic and incomprehensible as it may appear today, this enabled the Communist police to identify them and mark them for liquidation.

6. The Communist terror in those years was more ruthless than is realized in this country. Anyone who opposed the Government in any way paid with his life, or at least with his freedom.

#### THE REFERENDUM OF JUNE 1946 AND THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF JANUARY 1947

The struggle of the Polish Peasant Party in the years 1945-47 presents a picture of extreme self-sacrifice, courage, and patriotism. However, it is now apparent that its efforts were doomed from the very beginning:

1. The Communists had absolute power over the state administration: the police, courts, communications, radio, press, railroads—everything. This control over the public opinion media, over all the machinery necessary to carry on a political campaign, enabled them to paralyze any such efforts on the part of non-Communists.

2. The Communist majority in the Government was free to cancel or alter the Polish Peasant Party's electoral lists of candidates. The committee heard several witnesses on this point.

3. The secret police were free to arrest, murder, or terrorize any democratic leader or campaigner, and this was done to thousands.

4. In addition to the fact that the democratic leaders were refused any technical facilities to carry on their electoral campaign, their meetings were broken up in the most violent ways by hoodlums, Communist "shock groups," or secret and uniformed police. Many died from beatings at such demonstrations.

5. The "phony" Communist-controlled parties, on the other hand, were given all technical facilities such as transportation, press, radio, with no limitations nor control.

6. All members of the Polish armed forces were ordered to vote. Each soldier's ballot was not only opened, but had its serial number.

7. Workers in Government offices, factories, and institutions were forced, in many cases, to vote openly.

8. The presence of the Red army and the encirclement of Poland by the Communist-dominated countries made open opposition to the Communist regime extremely dangerous.

9. The electoral boards on all levels were predominately manned by Communist sympathizers or terrorized individuals. They were able to falsify returns without fear of being forced to account for their actions.

10. The American Embassy, headed at that time by Arthur Bliss Lane, although fully sympathetic to the patriotic elements in Poland, and very popular among the people, was completely helpless.

There were two occasions in the years 1945-47 in which the population was supposed to reveal their will by ballot. In June 1946 a referendum took place to which the voters were asked to answer by "Yes" or "No" three questions:

(1) "Are you in favor of abolishing the Senate?";

(2) "Do you wish the future constitution to embody the economic system introduced by the land reform and the nationalization of the basic branches of the national economy?";

(3) "Do you wish western frontiers of the Polish state fixed on the Baltic, the Oder and the Neisse Rivers?"



The Polish Peasant Party appealed to the populace to vote "No" to the first question and "Yes" to the last two. The Government bloc asked the voters to answer "Yes" to all three questions.

The official results of the referendum were:

	Yes	No
1st question.....	7, 844, 522	3, 688, 029
2d question.....	8, 899, 105	2, 634, 446
3d question.....	10, 534, 697	995, 854

A few days after the referendum Mr. Mikolajczyk lodged a protest demanding its invalidation. As he testified to the committee the Polish Peasant Party had discovered means to check results in 14 out of 16 provinces. Mikolajczyk showed that the vote to the first question was more than 83 percent "No" and only about 16 percent "Yes." The Government refused the demand and even forbade the publication of the protest with its statistical proof.

General elections took place on January 19, 1947. On January 5 the Department of State issued a note to the Polish Government pointing out that the electoral procedure was in complete contradiction to the Yalta agreement. The note was ignored and the Communist terror, abuses, murders, arrests, and violence continued.

The official results of the elections were as follows:

Entitled to vote.....	12, 709, 056	
Votes cast.....	11, 413, 618	
Valid votes.....	11, 244, 873	
Government bloc.....	9, 003, 682	394
Polish Peasant Party.....	1, 154, 847	28
Other groups (All progovernmental).....	987, 644	22
		444

One week later, on January 28, 1947, the United States officially protested against the manner in which the elections were carried on, stating that the Warsaw regime had failed "to carry out its solemn pledge." The same day the late Senator A. H. Vandenberg had this to say on the subject on the floor of the Senate:

\* \* \* (an election) which defies and defeats every elementary concept of autonomy, self-determination and democracy, and which nullifies the most solemn pledges of which Great Britain, the United States, and Soviet Russia are pledged.

On February 4, 1947, Bierut, a trusted Moscow agent, was reelected President of the Polish Republic. He received 408 votes out of 444 with all the Polish Peasant Party's deputies abstaining. Two days later the new government was formed. It included not a single non-Communist leader.

#### COMMUNIST LIQUIDATION OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES AFTER 1947

Almost immediately, the new, exclusively Communist government started a mass liquidation of democratic elements.

In July 1947, 23 prominent Socialist leaders, critical of the party's submissiveness to the Communists, were arrested and charged with plotting to overthrow the Government and spying for a "foreign power."

A public trial of 71 prominent Polish leaders, accused of organizing an anti-Communist Underground, took place in Cracow during August and September. Eight of the accused were condemned to death and nine to long prison terms. Among the latter were two Polish Peasant Party leaders, Stanislaw Mierzwa and Karol Buczek, who had been close collaborators of Mikolajczyk. Meanwhile, the official press continued its attacks on the head of the Polish Peasant Party, branding him a "foreign agent." When he received information in October 1947 that his own arrest was imminent, Mikolajczyk and a few of his followers, secretly left the country.

His departure left the Polish Peasant Party leaderless and helpless. Nationwide mass arrests and trials of "Mikolajczyk's supporters" followed. In May 1948 the party, deprived of all independent elements, joined the governmental Peasant Party. With this, the last vestige of open, anti-Communist activity was extinguished. Poland was to follow the Soviet pattern. When her Government became the Kremlin's satellite, her people became the Kremlin's victims.

#### GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 1952

After 1948 there was no longer any open opposition in Poland. All political groups, whatever their names, had been included in the Government bloc.

In the elections of 1952, there was but one ballot. To fulfill his duty, the voter had only to come to the polls, take the ballot, put it in a prepared envelope, and drop it into a box. He was not permitted to cross out any candidate's name, to add new names, nor to abstain from voting.

Even in these circumstances, however, thanks to their ingenuity, the people still found ways to express their opposition. This was described in detail by the former high Communist official, Mr. Jozef Swiatlo, mentioned above. For several years he was deputy director of department X in the Ministry of Public Security. His department watched over the party's security and the political purity of its members. Swiatlo had the confidence of the ruling clique in Poland and had access to the most secret of the regime's files. He escaped in December 1953. There were means of finding out that his testimony has been given in good faith and caused serious repercussions in the governmental apparatus in Warsaw.

In the hearings in Milwaukee, he revealed in full the shocking truth about the way the election returns of 1952 were falsified. It was the first time that the technique of falsification was revealed to the world with such details and by such an authoritative witness.

According to Mr. Swiatlo, the Communist regime was not satisfied with the way previous election returns had been altered. In 1946 and 1947 each electoral board falsified the returns in its own district. This procedure, the regime decided, involved too many people who might later expose the fraud. Besides, it was practically impossible for the highest officials of the party to know how people really voted.

In 1952 the electoral boards on all levels were ordered to report true results of elections to the central electoral board in Warsaw. At the same time, a special unit was organized in the Ministry of Security—a unit so secret that not even the high government officials knew about it. Swiatlo was 1 of its 5 members, headed by General

Romkowski, vice minister of Public Security and significantly a member of the officially operating central electoral board.

The unit received in advance blank return forms from all districts over the country. Meticulously they entered forged signatures of the respective electoral board members which special secret agents of department X had previously collected. They also filled in all other data. Only the figures indicating the number of people entitled to vote, the number actually voting, and the count of valid and invalid votes were omitted.

A special expert in forgery was sent from Moscow to supervise the work. It was agreed that just after the elections the unit was to receive, for a very short period of time, genuine returns. On their basis they were to fill in the false figures on their own previously "prepared" forms. The true returns were to serve for orientation to make the counterfeits more creditable. Subsequently they were to destroy the original forms and to send to the central electoral board the spurious returns. The secretary of the board was department X's agent, and she acted as a secret liaison between the two.

A few hours after the polls were closed, General Romkowski visited the unit and declared that the elections had turned unexpectedly well, and there was no need for any falsification. He took all forged blank returns, announced that the work of the unit was finished, recommended that it should be forgotten, and left. Evidently, the highest party officials trusted department X, but only to a certain degree—enough to order a forgery, but not enough to let them know the true results of elections. According to Swiatlo, probably only a few persons in the whole country know them.

With this method, the top leaders know the feeling of the people and only a very limited number of people are engaged in falsifications. There are no proofs of abuse. The electoral boards all over the country carry on their election day duties "honestly."

#### LIFE IN PRESENT DAY POLAND

Life in the Poland of today is rather well known. Many books, as well as the press, radio, and hundreds of escapees supply information on it in addition to the witnesses who testified before the committee.

The following factors are evident in the present Polish reality:

1. Polish people live under a totalitarian regime which enslaves not only their bodies but also tries to enslave their minds. The Communist government presents probably the most integrated totalitarian system ever known. The terror, the scope of physical extermination of actual or potential opponents, and the amount of people arrested and deported far exceed any totalitarian forms of the past.

2. The greatest obstacle to the Communist subjection of the minds of Poles is the Catholic Church. There was no witness who did not confirm this when asked. Since 95 percent of all Poles living now in Poland are Catholics, this fact is of extreme importance. It is also the reason why the regime concentrates its attacks on religion and the church.

The position of the church under the Communist domination; the deportations of priests, ministers, and rabbis from 1939 to 1941 and their extermination after 1944 in the eastern half of Poland, as well as the present Communist attacks on religion, were described and docu-



mented in detail by many authoritative witnesses. The most prominent among them were Bishop W. Fierla, the head of the Polish Lutheran Church abroad, Orthodox Bishop Mateusz Siemiaszko, Father Adam Wrobel, Prof. Adam Zoltowski, and Prof. Tadeusz Brzeski, the prewar rector of the Warsaw University.

Hundreds of priests have been killed, tortured, or imprisoned; 10 of the 20 Roman Catholic bishops are deprived of their freedom; 2,000 priests are in jail; 2,000 leading Catholic laymen are in concentration camps; 400 seminarians have disappeared. In addition, great efforts are being made to promote a so-called "National Church" which would be just a tool of the Government.

The public trial of Bishop Kaczmarek, followed by the imprisonment of the primate of Poland, Cardinal Wyszynski, are proofs that the Communist masters are determined to destroy the church completely.

3. After the church, it is the peasantry who most effectively opposes communism. The efforts to collectivize agriculture had to be slowed down, not only because collectivization was not economically successful, but also because the Polish peasants, deeply attached to their land, oppose it, often by force. Mr. Swiatlo read reports in the Ministry of Public Security that peasants sometimes would go so far as to lie down in front of tractors that were plowing up the boundary lines of their property in the attempt to form huge collective farms.

4. Polish economy has been entirely integrated into the economy of the U. S. S. R. The overall plans of the Soviet Empire, rather than any local needs, determine the decisions of the Warsaw economic planners. Great stress is being put on the development of heavy industry to increase the Soviet war potential. The economic exploitation of Poland has no precedent in the past. The testimony of Mr. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk revealed that in 1945 Moscow forced an agreement on the Polish Government concerning the export to the U. S. S. R. of the Polish coal. While the world prices were \$16 a ton, Poland had to sell yearly 12 million tons for \$1.23 a ton. Polish economy was to lose yearly \$150 million on that one item.

5. Slave labor is an organic part of the Communist rule. Because of its extent, the so-called "Communist achievements," particularly in the field of industrial development, have nothing to do with progress as we understand it in this country.

6. While the Soviet integration of the Polish economy is somehow inconspicuous, the Polish armed forces are openly led, controlled, and indoctrinated by the Russians. All command positions are manned by officers sent from Russia. The organization, discipline, education, and even the soldiers' oath of allegiance, follow the Soviet pattern strictly. Gen. S. Kopanski, the military chief of staff in the present Polish Government in exile, supplied the committee with detailed information and documentation on this subject.

7. The Polish regime is completely dependent on Moscow. There is not a single line of activity in which the present Polish rulers could act without getting previous approval from the Kremlin. An elaborate system of controls has been established by which every social, political, economic, or any other agency is supervised by a respective department of the Ministry of Public Security. Every department of this Ministry receives, in its turn, orders from its Soviet "adviser." Mr. Swiatlo, Mrs. Irena Born, another former Communist official,

as well as other well-informed witnesses revealed much information about this. (See appendixes Nos. 1, 2, 3.)

8. The real power in Poland rests secretly with the party which again is strictly under the discipline of Moscow. The national patriotic slogans used very often in the past, as well as presently, are nothing but a smokescreen. Those Communists who take those slogans seriously, or who cannot get rid of the "nationalistic tendencies" sooner or later, are in danger. According to Mr. Swiatlo, there are still many "national Communists" in Poland. The "monolithic unity" of the party is one more Communist legend. In spite of all Soviet efforts, Titoism is still attractive in many Polish Communist circles.

9. Soviet expansionism presents two aspects: it is a sort of a crusade carried on in the name of a godless, secular creed, known as Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism; however, it seems also to be a continuation of traditional Russian imperialism. Both aspects find their expression in the way the Communists try to mold the minds of the people. On the one hand, the overall education follows the line "Nationalism in form—socialism in content." On the other hand, however, Russian language, culture and tradition, Russian interests, Russian "genius," "goodness," and "generosity," are being stressed everywhere and on all occasions. So far it is difficult to ascertain which one of these two aspects takes precedence over the other.

#### CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the numerous testimonies as well as voluminous documentation, the following conclusions are reached:

(1) Poland is not an independent country. Genuine freedom, in the American sense, was lost at the moment of the Red army's entry. It was not freedom which the Red army brought to the Poles—it was a substitution of Nazi oppression for Communist slavery.

(2) The independence of Poland was destroyed by Soviet Russia. The Kremlin took full advantage of the fact, integrating every part of Polish national life into the Soviet pattern. Polish governmental agencies and other organizations are merely smokescreens behind which is hidden Soviet domination.

(3) Poland lost its independence against the will of her people. Poles oppose the Communist regime wherever and however they can. The present situation makes it impossible for them to manifest opposition openly in an organized way and on a national scale. There is no satellite Poland; there is a satellite Polish Communist regime and a Communist-captive Polish nation.

(4) The Polish regime, and Polish diplomats represent neither the Polish people nor Polish interests. They are oppressors of the Poles and represent only Soviet Russian interests.

(5) The American Government's establishment of relations with the Polish regime did not mean that it had also established relations with the Polish people. The Polish nation has still to have its official spokesman in this country.

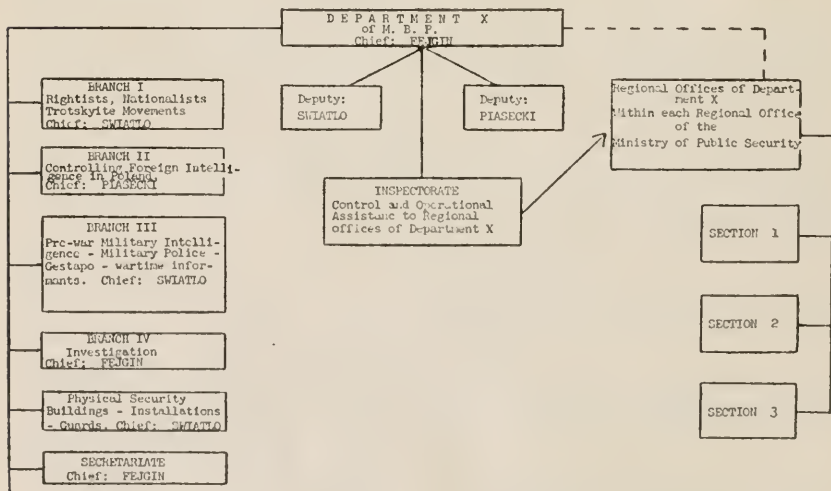
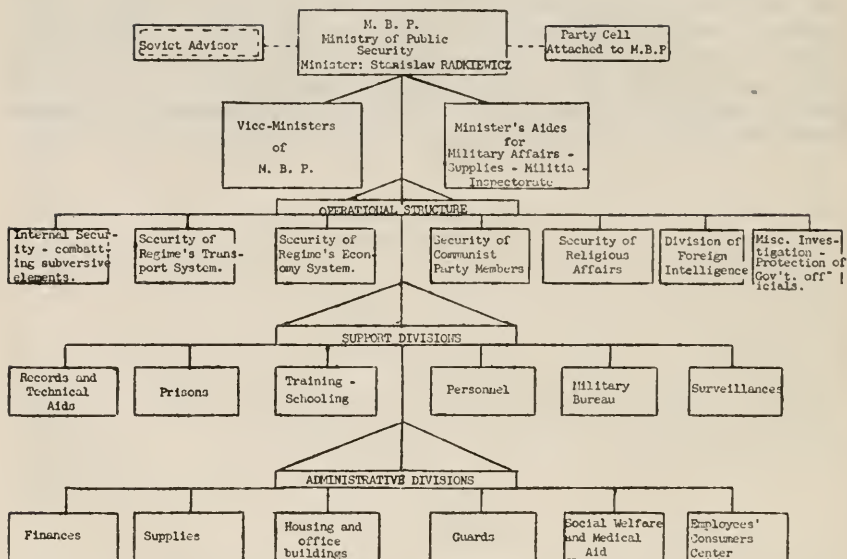
(6) While there is no possibility in Poland for open activities aimed at independence, such possibilities do exist for Poles in the free world. Large communities of Polish exiles in the free world constitute an important spiritual link with their fellow countrymen behind the

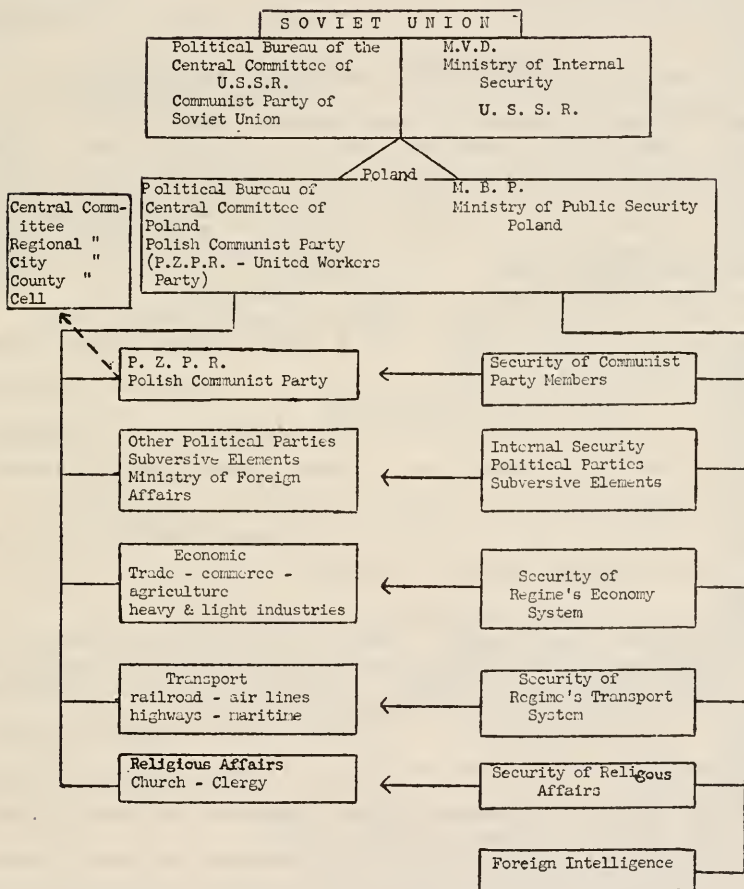


Iron Curtain, notably in preservation of national culture and traditional affiliation with the Western World. Patriotic efforts of Polish exiles should be supported in every respect.

(7) In spite of the Communist indoctrination, the Polish people still maintain a warm friendship for the American people. Their hopes are centered on America. This imposes a great responsibility on the American people. The United States Government must stand firmly by its pledge not to be a party to any agreement or treaty which would confirm or prolong the unwilling subordination of Poland. Freedom of Poland must be a permanent goal of our national policy.

# APPENDIXES





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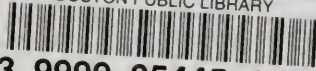








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